









## GREAT FIRE IN CANTON.

## HALF A MILLION OF DOLLARS DAMAGE.

## RUMORS ON THE "MAK".

Owing to the necessity for finding space in our last issue for a mass of reports of public meetings and other things valuable and voluminous, we were obliged to hold over the following report of a great fire in Canton, forwarded by our correspondent under date 27th ultimo:—

At 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon huge volumes of smoke were seen from the Shamen ascending heavenwards and the tolling of bells and the hoarse cries of the city watchmen soon convinced me that a big fire was raging in the heart of this densely populated city. Proceeding to the spot in hot haste I found a whole street ablaze and ascertained that the fire originated in a fire-cracker shop and quickly spread on either side to stores stocked with silks, silks, silks, and all sorts of valuable stuff. The native fire brigades were as feeble as usual and wretchedly organized, and to make things worse the pumps wouldn't throw anything like a decent stream of water. The consequence was that the fire raged until about midnight consuming about 400 houses and causing a loss to the owners and owners of at least half a million of dollars. All this is a total loss, no insurance being effected in this wretchedly governed and disgracefully managed city. It is believed that this disastrous fire was the work of incendiaries who desired to loot—and did loot—the stores of the wealthy traders people.

On all sides I learn that the secret societies are very active just now and are raising money in every conceivable way for the purpose of getting together the "slaves of war." Their cry is "Down with the Tartars," and in order to "down" them they want money to buy arms. This great fire is attributed to the secret societies who have thus raised their funds and it is to the same source that big grain riots in the Delta, resulting in the capture of several hundred tons of best Kwangtung rice, the other day is stated to have been traced. The whole province is undoubtedly in a very chaotic condition.

## NOTES FROM THE NORTH.

(From our own Correspondent.)

Tientsin, Feb. 16th, 1898.

Your correspondent has to plead several illnesses as the cause of his somewhat long silence, and even now it is said the depressing environment of medicinal paraphernalia that he once more takes up the pen to contribute to your generous columns. Very little has transpired during the past three weeks, so little that they may be described as utterly eventless. The loan negotiations have not as far as anyone knows advanced a step, and the struggle to clinch the bargain with China is being silently maintained between Russia and England. I believe there is a suspension of truth in Reuters' wires to the effect that Tallenwan has been withdrawn as a condition of the loan. The home Government have intimated that it was never mentioned as a *sine qua non*, but the opinion that it was mentioned, probably especially for the purpose of being withdrawn later and answering for a gracious concession on G.B.'s part. For myself I quite fall to see what use Tallenwan or any other port so far north can possibly be to us. It is satisfactory to know that Germany is going to throw Kiaochow open to the general public, and it will of course be our merchants' own fault if they do not go there. But while other nations are very quick to take advantage of openings we make, we are as a rule very slow to return the compliment when the South and more Central. You will see by the accompanying diagram that a number of railways are now under the consideration of the Tientsin Yamen, that is that it is possible for their construction with foreign capital are now before the Chinese Government, and there is reason to believe that some at least have been already sanctioned. The Belgian line which was projected to run from Peking via Chingling, Kailong, and Yanchow to Hankow is definitely knocked on the head. Hankow will however eventually have a railway connection with both north and south by means of a line which will run from Canton to Peking, the line which is reported to have been granted for construction to England runs from Bhamo to Yunnan, and thence northward to Suichow in Szechuan, where it stops abruptly and to all appearances aimlessly. Whether it is under contemplation later on to run a line from this point to Hankow I do not know, but the nature of the country might render this difficult. The majority of the projected lines I am told are to be constructed with American capital. I find I shall not be able to send the tracing of these lines this week, but hope to do so next time, when you will see more clearly how China is likely to be opened up in the near future by the iron horse.

While on the subject of railways, the new saloon carriage just built at Tientsin for the Empress Dowager's use is completed and has made a trial trip. The Empress is going to take a trip to Peking and will pass through Tientsin. By Special. During the study of Western Sciences is being accelerated, and the promises of Government service being held out to successful competitors in Geography, Mathematics, Military and Naval tactics, political economy, physics, etc. This sounds good, but as examinations are to be held only every ten or twenty years it does not quite take one's breath away, nor suggest such a complete subversion of Confucian methods as China needs.

In order to escape from her trying position between the devil and the deep sea, China has suggested to Japan a little postponement of the day of reckoning, but Japan does not see it. She stands like Shylock waiting for her pound of flesh, and evidently means to have it, while China will obviously cling to the hope that a Portia will at the eleventh hour come to her relief.

## NEWS BY THE AUSTRALIAN MAIL.

The China Navigation Co.'s steamer *Taiyuan*, Capt. R. Nelson, from Sydney and ports, arrived in harbour last night. For the subject of telegrams we are indebted to our Colonial exchanges:—

PERTH, February 3rd.  
The gold yield of Western Australia for the month of January was 93,997 ounces.

LONDON, February 3rd.  
General Lockhart, in command of the troops on the Indian frontier, says that a spring campaign against the Afridi tribesmen is essential, but he believes they will surrender on a fresh advance of the British-Indian troops.

News has been received of a disastrous blizzard in which occurred over the Eastern States of America.  
Thirty-six lives were lost, and there has also been great damage done, especially at Boston.

February 4th.  
The Japanese Government have withdrawn their opposition to the American annexation of Hawaii on condition that the Japanese have equal rights with other residents.

All the principal English newspapers heartily congratulate the Australian cricketers on winning the rubber.

February 7th.  
Germany is threatening to quarantine all horses arriving from America.

At Washington this is regarded as part of the general movement to exclude American products from Germany.

SYDNEY, February 4th.  
Four men have been fined each £25 for breaches of the Gambling Suppression Act.

February 5th.  
Stoddard's team of cricketers commenced a match against a New South Wales eleven to-day.

The Australians batted first, and at the conclusion of the day's play had lost seven wickets for 297 runs. The principal feature of the play was the splendid innings of Mackenzie who completed 130 runs.

February 7th.  
The cricket match, England v. New South Wales was continued, and the first innings of the New South Wales team closed for 415 runs.

The Englishmen then went in, and at the close of the day's play had lost six wickets for 217 runs. The principal English scorers were Walworth 50, and Hayward 61.

SYDNEY, February 9th.  
The cricket match between New South Wales and Stoddard's English Eleven was continued yesterday, the attendance being moderate.

The Englishmen concluded their first innings for 387 runs, 25 less than the Colonial score, the principal scorers being Driscoll with 100.

The New South Wales team commenced their second innings and had 140 runs for two wickets when stumps were drawn.

The match was continued yesterday, about 5,000 persons attending, the weather being very hot. At the conclusion of the day's play the Welshmen had lost 8 wickets for 452 runs.

During the early part of the day, play was extremely slow, and things looked very bad for the Colonial, but the splendid batting of Gregory (177), Maxwell, Daines and Mackenzie, who all played excellent cricket, placed the matter on quite a different footing. For the Englishmen Hexame did excellent service, taking six wickets for 66.

ADLAIDE, February 9th.  
A man named Fry, who lived at Glen Osmond, a suburb of Adelaide, shot his wife and three children, and then committed suicide. Nothing is known as to the reason for the act.

February 10th.  
The Englishmen commenced the return match against N.S.W. in Sydney on the 10th of February and was continued on the 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th.

The wicket was in splendid order, and the weather warm and fine. N.S.W. won the toss, and batted first, putting up 414 before the last wicket fell. McKenzie made 130, and Pry, the new inter-colonial player, 80, did not out. The Englishmen responded with 387, Stoddard being top scorer with 100. Goals in for their second innings N. S. W. knocked up 452 for the loss of 8 wickets; Gregory top score with 171.

[At this stage of the game the wire from Adelaide to Port Darwin collapsed somewhat about Hergott Springs, and was not repaired up to time of going to press.]

## SHORT CUTS TO FORTUNE.

## RECENT SEARCHES FOR TREASURE-TROVE.

That very suspicious story of the discovery of treasure worth 30,000,000 dollars by an English man-of-war on Cocos Island reminds me (writes an occasional correspondent of the *Westminster Budget*) that during the past year or two there have grown up something that very closely resembles mania in the direction of hunting for lost treasure. The people who have developed the craze the most keenly are the Americans, but we ourselves are not guileless. Mr. Kellogg's trip to Trinidad Island in search of the bullion and jewellery supposed to have been deposited there for safety from the sick of Lima in Peru is now a matter of history. More recently we have had on hand the search for the treasure of the *Zulu*, which went down in 1799 off the coast of Holland, with 2,000,000 in gold and silver bullion; and only an English naval captain will lead an expedition to the Arabian and Red Seas with the intention of picking up, if he may, the untold gold lost along that immortal trade route from the days of the Phoenicians to our own.

The captain confidently expects with patience and assiduity to pick up, first in the shallow waters of the Arabian Sea, and afterwards in the Red Sea, wealth worth at the very least £200,000,000. He has the writer's very best wishes for his complete success.

A Long Island man is building just now a curious submarine vessel, with which he proposes to scour the floor of the ocean in search of treasure. The vessel will be 80 ft. long. From a preliminary account of her we gather that the surface buoyancy will be overcome by means of heavy weights attached to long wire cables connected with drums at either end of the vessel. By the operation of these drums the vessel will be drawn to the bottom of the sea. Running fore and aft are sails with broad-bladed wheels, which are connected with an electric motor. "In this way," we are told, "the ship will be transformed into a vehicle—a sort of electric motor for the benefit of the numerous mermaids, one may suppose. It would be useless to go into details regarding the construction of this peculiar ship vehicle. Suffice it that the inventor believes in it, and was convinced himself, further, that by its means he will become richer than the undertakers in 12 months ships lost along the days of Drake, and of the latitudes and longitude of the spots where they are supposed to rest beneath the waves. He will first make a bee-line for the *Orion*, which was sunk by Nelson at the Battle of the Nile. She had a large amount of jewellery and plate, and £600,000 in specie on board. Then he will look for wreck of the *Erasmus*, lost off the Delaware in 1793, with a great amount of Spanish specie and bullion. On his list is also the *Golden Gate*, sunk off Hatteras in the early 18th, and simply filled with gold from California.

## THE NEW REPUBLIC.

The novel desire to persecute the Jews which is spreading so fast through Europe, and which will produce grave political consequences, is marked by some new and some unexpected features. In the first place, it is much more general than it was. The Jews have been persecuted in turn by every nation, including our own; but sharp persecution, the kind which threatens life and property, has usually broken out in one nation at a time. Now the whole Continent persecutes. It is, we believe, literally true that while Jews everywhere rise to the top of all professions except the naval, there is no country in Europe except England, certainly no large country, where the race, as a race, does not feel that it is in immediate and most serious danger.

The new hatred, which is far deeper than when, in 1878, George Eliot published "Theophrastus Such," with its eloquent but forgotten appeal on behalf of the race, is the more remarkable because of its contrast with the new spirit of the age, which, in theory at all events, tends toward a regime of "love." The nations are believed to have become gentler, and in some departments of life—e.g. the entire absence of judicial torture—the belief is certainly well founded. Religious bigotry has in a marked manner died away and, moreover, the Continental world tends towards Theism—that is towards the very doctrine of which the Jews for ages upon ages alone upheld—the torch. The horror of the foreigner *qua* foreigner has almost disappeared, all the peoples tolerating. If they do not like, all visitors who are white and who speak in any intelligible tongue. The old jealousy of "patrie," that is, of intellectual rapidity, which was once infinitely stronger than the literary class of to-day could be induced to believe, has died away or confined itself—a very curious fact—to a section of the upper and middle classes, many of whom remain proud of their stupidity and mental slowness. The world, in fact, though far from gentle, has become distinctly gentler, and brutality is no longer confounded with manliness; but the change, which is saving thousands of the inefficient, and in great physicians' opinion lowering the vital force of whole sections of society, has brought no comfort or protection to the Jew. That he gives some provocations is undeniable; but the marvel remains that he gives only the same provocations as other people, upon whom they are not visited. He is so law-abiding that his lawlessness for law is constantly brought against him as a reproach. He marries only among his own people, but so on the Continent do all the aristocratic classes. He wears east of Vienna a special costume but so do half the countries of Europe, and specially in France, do a large proportion of those who live by labour. He retains Asiatic ideas about food, but his ideas on this point are constantly brought against him as a reproach. He marries only among his own people, but so on the Continent do all the aristocratic classes. He wears east of Vienna a special costume but so do half the countries of Europe, and specially in France, do a large proportion of those who live by labour. He retains Asiatic ideas about food, but his ideas on this point are constantly brought against him as a reproach.

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## NOT A N D A.

## CALENDAR.

## MARCH.

Meteorological means based on ten years' observations to 1895.

Barometer ..... 30.59  
Thermometer ..... 62.0  
Humidity ..... 85.0  
Rainfall ..... 4.08

## TO-DAY.

Barometer ..... 30.10  
Thermometer ..... 67  
Humidity ..... 83  
Rainfall ..... 84

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## Consignees.

## "GLEN" LINE OF STEAM PACKETS.

## FROM MIDDLESBORO, LONDON AND STRAITS.

## THE Steamship

"GLENSHIEL" having arrived from the above Ports, Consignees of Cargo by her are hereby informed that their Goods are being landed at their risk into the Godowns of the Hongkong and Kowloon Wharf and Godown Company, Limited, at Kowloon, whence delivery may be obtained.

Optional Cargo will be forwarded unless notice to the contrary be given before 2 P.M. TO-DAY.

Cargo remaining undelivered after the 3rd March will be subject to rent.

No Fire Insurance has been effected. Consignees are requested to present all Claims for damages and/or shortages not later than the 10th March, otherwise they will not be recognised.

Bills of Lading will be countersigned by JARDINE, MATHESON & Co., Agents.

Hongkong, 24th February, 1898. [1-7 304]

## NOTICE TO CONSIGNEES.

## THE P. &amp; O. S. N. Co.'s Steamship

## "SOCOTRA,"

## FROM ANTWERP, LONDON, PORT SAID, BOMBAY AND STRAITS.

Consignees of Cargo by the above-n



